

City News

The Newsletter of the
City of Veneta

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Public Safety: Animal control

By Mayor Sandra Larson

Recently in Veneta, a dog pushed through a fence to attack another dog being walked on a leash in a residential neighborhood. Trying to break up a dog-on-dog attack generally isn't recommended, but most of us would probably try, just as this dog's owner did.

Unfortunately, the attacking dog was large, powerful and not easily intimidated. In the melee, the neighbor was knocked to the ground and sustained a serious bite injury to her hand. Her dog also was seriously injured before someone from the attacking dog's household intervened.

The City's code enforcement officer, accompanied by a Lane County sheriff's deputy, investigated the incident. Citations were issued for "dog at large," "failure to obtain a dog license," and "dangerous behavior," and the attacking dog was placed under home quarantine for ten days, standard procedure to determine the presence of rabies, whether or not there is proof of inoculation. It was falsely reported in the news that the dog did not have a rabies certificate.

The offending dog's owner was to answer the charges in Veneta Municipal Court on March 19, but requested a postponement, so the Court proceedings will be delayed until April 16.

The victim, her spouse, and many of her neighbors are distressed that the dog has not been removed from their neighborhood, fearful that as long as the aggressor dog remains there another such attack could occur, perhaps this time involving children walking to and from the school bus or playing in adjoining backyards.

Their concerns are both understandable and reasonable. However, we are a community governed by law, not emotion. Our deputy and code enforcement officer acted properly in accordance with Veneta's municipal code, which, among other things, differentiates between a dog attack on another dog and an attack on a person. That code does not provide for impoundment of the offending dog in this instance.

Veneta is growing and changing from a predominantly rural to a more urban community with more densely populated neighborhoods. Laws and regulations that once served us well may no longer be appropriate or adequate, and must be periodically reviewed. In light of this incident, the City Council has determined that it is time to re-examine our animal regulations and we will do so in an upcoming public work session.

Council meetings and/or work sessions

are held on the second and fourth Mondays of the month. As always, we encourage public comment. Agendas are posted to the City website the Friday before each Council meeting.

City Easter Egg Hunt early April

One of Veneta's most beloved and popular annual events takes place in April, heralding the onset of Spring.

Veneta Elementary School will host the 29th annual Veneta Easter Egg Hunt on April 4 between 10:15 a.m. and 12 p.m.

Sponsors for the volunteer-run event include the members of the Veneta Park Board and Kiwanis of Fern Ridge.

The event kicks off with story time at 10:15 a.m. The hunt itself starts at 11 a.m. The well-attended event can draw more than 400 children, so the City recommends families come early to be ready when the event starts.

Don't forget your basket!

See full color insert with this month's utility bill.



CITY OF VENETA - CIVIC CALENDAR - APRIL 2015		
Veneta City Hall - 88184 8th Street, Veneta, Oregon		
1	Veneta Park Board Meeting - City Hall	4:30 p.m.
4	Easter Egg Hunt - Veneta Elementary, 88131 Territorial Rd.	Story time - 10:15 a.m. Hunt 11:00 to 12:00 p.m.
6	Veneta Planning Commission Meeting - City Hall	7:00 p.m.
13	Veneta Urban Renewal Agency Work Session - City Hall	6:00 p.m.
	Veneta City Council Meeting - City Hall	7:00 p.m.
	Veneta Urban Renewal Agency Meeting - immediately following	
16	Municipal Court - City Hall	8:30 a.m.
24	Earth Day Celebration - Veneta Elementary, 88131 Territorial Rd.	12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.
25	Meet Sgt. Halvorson (Lane County Sheriff's Office contract Sergeant for the City of Veneta) - Fern Ridge Library	1:00 p.m.
27	Veneta City Council Meeting - City Hall	7:00 p.m.
Calendar updates will be posted on the City's website at www.ci.veneta.or.us		
This Civic Calendar was sent to: Fern Ridge Review, Fern Ridge Public Library, Fern Ridge School District 28J, and Lane Fire Authority		

City adopts economic development plan

On April 13, 2015, the City Council will adopt the "Veneta Economic Development Strategy: Five-Year Action Plan, 2015-2019." The Plan essentially articulates the City's role in economic development and outlines the resources it can commit to support the needs of entrepreneurs for the mutual benefit of the entire community. To ensure the plan was inclusive, a joint committee made up of 5 city councilors, 5 planning commissioners, and 4 local business stakeholders participated in the three-month long development of the strategic plan, explained City Administrator Ric Ingham.

The final report outlined four goals and ten strategies that helped the city craft 23 action plans. Goals include making a strong commitment to economic development; a concerted effort to retain, expand, and recruit businesses and encourage entrepreneurial spirit; to increase the range of retail and commercial services in Veneta; and to continue ongoing infrastructure improvements. Actions include, for instance, improving signage to direct traffic to downtown Veneta, continuing to upgrade downtown infrastructure, conducting market analysis to better understand products and services de-

sired by Veneta residents, improving pedestrian and streetscape infrastructure, and so forth.

"Economic development has changed significantly over time" Ingham explained. "We always need to have an appropriate labor force and buildable land, but at this point, success is based more on entrepreneurial spirit." For cities like Veneta, which are outside of the I-5 corridor, that means getting more creative. "Because of our location, we can't expect to recruit a large manufacturing or production facility. So we need to change our focus accordingly and be more realistic about what kinds of businesses we can attract." Ingham said that a structured analysis of Veneta's business climate told the committee that it was better to focus its efforts on attracting smaller, more professional businesses.

"We want to make the most effective use of our limited resources," Ingham explained. "We've done well with that so far and have been successful in attracting new businesses of late. But this new plan will serve as a blueprint to help us to do an even better job of targeting our economic development efforts in the future."

Why it's important to license your dog

In the City of Veneta, as in most municipalities, all dogs must be licensed. But why? "That tag is your dog's phone call home," explained Code Enforcement Officer Teresa Warrick. "If we find a lost dog with a current tag, we can get that animal home." Otherwise, it can be difficult to reunite a pet with its owner.

Veneta has required that dogs be licensed since the city was established. One of the primary reasons for the licensing program is to prevent the spread of rabies. "To obtain a license, you must show proof that your dog has been vaccinated," Warrick said. Generally, dogs receive their first vaccination at six months, which is good for one year. The next vaccination covers the animal for three years.

Licensing also helps city staff to enforce policies on how many dogs are allowed per household. "Each household within city limits may have three adult dogs and three adult cats," Warrick explained. Residents with more than one acre may have five of each.

Ownership restrictions in the city apply to certain types of animals. "Residents may own any breed of dog, but may not have exotic animals inside city limits," she added. That includes such animals as bears and exotic cats like cougars. More information on animal related policies and regulations can be found on the city's website under Municipal Code #6.05.050 and dog licenses may be obtained through Veneta City Hall and Veneta Veterinary Clinic.

What to do when a dog bites

A dog bite can leave a victim physically injured as well as emotionally traumatized and fearful. Such incidents should be dealt with quickly, and the City of Veneta has well-established protocols to do so.

"When a city resident suffers a dog, or any other mammal bite, the victim should immediately clean any wound, call the city to notify them of the incident, and contact their physician to determine if a tetanus shot or other treatment is necessary," said Teresa Warrick, the city's Code Enforcement Officer. A Veneta Animal Control Officer will be dispatched as quickly as possible to obtain details about the incident. Cooperating with the officer will help him or her find the animal. The officer will collect information about the circumstances of the bite, a detailed description of the dog, names and contact information of any witnesses, and photographs and other evidence of injury. If the victim has obtained medical care, the city will request a copy of any physician, hospital, and/or police reports.

The Animal Control Officer will attempt to locate and

apprehend the animal as quickly as possible. Once found, the dog will automatically be quarantined at the home of its keeper. "If any mammal bites a person and the skin is broken and blood has been drawn, that animal must be quarantined for 10 days," explained Warrick. "This is to ensure that rabies is not present and applies even if the animal is current on its rabies vaccinations."

Failure to keep the animal quarantined can result in a citation. "If the court mandates any further restrictions, the animal's keeper must comply," Warrick continued. In most instances, after the quarantine, the situation is over. But if the nature of an attack is particularly vicious or unprovoked, the courts can issue specific conditions on the disposition of the dog.

"We can, under our code, determine a dog to be a nuisance and can then request that the dog be removed from the city," Warrick concluded.

Lane County Sheriff dispatch, 541-682-4141, handles all animal control calls that occur after hours.